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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. DINGELL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 18, 2022.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DEBBIE DINGELL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 10, 2022, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

ENHANCE, DON'T CUT, SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, the COVID virus has impacted our senior citizens more severely than any other population. With over 1 million deaths now in the country, more than 750,000 of them are people over the age of 65.

This global pandemic has also brought with it inflation, as well, and

people on fixed incomes are the people who are most hurt by inflation.

Madam Speaker, those are our fellow senior citizens who are struggling now in this pandemic. Martin Luther King used to say that it is important to always recognize the fierce urgency of now. The fierce urgency for the 65 million Americans on Social Security is that we do something now.

It has been more than 51 years since Congress enhanced Social Security benefits. This is not something the President can do by executive order, although I commend President Biden for his straightforward support of Social Security, calling it a sacred trust with the American people. Indeed, it is.

Now, in the midst of this pandemic and in the midst of what has transpired with regard to inflation, our senior citizens need direct relief from Congress. Congress is the only body that can provide it.

The good news is that President Biden and the House of Representatives have a bill to do just that, a bill that will enhance benefits that haven't been taken up in more than 51 years. People will see an across-the-board increase in their Social Security. People who were paying taxes on Social Security will no longer be paying those taxes. People who have gotten a COLA some years and other years not will now get a COLA based on their actual expenses. There will be no more waiting period for disability victims.

There will also be the repeal of WEP and GPO, as the President of the United States has called for, making sure that firefighters, policemen, and teachers all across this country will now be able, as will their spouses, to receive the benefits that they richly deserve.

These are consequential times that we live in, Madam Speaker, and the spotlight is upon us as we approach the summer recess.

There are plans as to how to deal with Social Security, and they are

pretty straightforward. The Republicans have put forward three plans. RICK SCOTT from Florida calls for ending Social Security in 5 years. The Republican Study Group has more than 20 specific cuts and a 21 percent across-the-board cut to Social Security by raising the age of Social Security recipients. For every year you raise the age, it is a 7 percent cut. There is no logic to the fact that people are living longer so they should receive less.

Madam Speaker, you know that, in 1971, the last time Congress expanded Social Security benefits, Richard Nixon was President of the United States and a gallon of milk cost 72 cents. There has not been an improvement and enhancement to Social Security since 1971. It is our responsibility as a Congress to do so.

The Republicans have a plan. God bless his soul, Sam Johnson, who I admired, a Vietnam war hero, a person who had incredible integrity, put forward a plan. His plan called for cuts in order to make Social Security solvent.

The Democratic plan says, no, it is time to enhance Social Security. More than 5 million people live in poverty and receive a below-poverty-level check from their government. It is time for us to act.

PROTECT ENERGY GRID FROM GREEN NEW DEAL POLICIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, as temperatures rise, our energy grid has been left unprepared to keep up with the power demands to keep up with this intense summer heat.

Instead of investing in the coal, natural gas, and Marcellus shale that is under the feet of my constituents in Pennsylvania, President Biden has turned his back on my communities in

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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